

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5632

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 6326

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRAS 785 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI

INFO BOMBAY/CALCUTTA 29 APR 76.

QUOTE:

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MADRAS 785

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: DMK PRESIDENT KARUNANIDHI'S ASSURANCES TO GOI WHILE
ATTEMPTING TO REVIVE DMK ACTIVITIES

1. ADDRESSING AN INDOOR MEETING OF DMK WORKERS IN MADRAS APRIL 24,
DMK PRESIDENT AND FORMER CHIEF MINISTER M. KARUNANIDHI ASSURED
THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE DMK WOULD CONTINUE TO BE A DISCIPLINED
FORCE AND WOULD MAINTAIN PEACE. KARUNANIDHI AFFIRMED THAT THE DMK
STOOD FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR
SECRET ACTIVITIES OF ANY NATURE IN THE DMK. HE SAID: "THE PRESIDENT'S
RULE WAS IN ONE WAY A BLESSING IN DISGUISE. I CAN'T FIND WORDS TO
THANK THE PRIME MINISTER FOR GIVING ME AN OPPORTUNITY IN THE PAST
THREE MONTHS TO JUDGE WHO ARE MY FRIENDS AND WHO ARE NOT. SOME
BRANCHES OF THE 60-YEAR-OLD DMK MIGHT HAVE BEEN CUT OFF BUT AS
LONG AS THE TRUNK AND THE MAIN ROOT ARE THERE, THE PARTY WILL LIVE
AND GROW STRONG. WE WANT TO BUILD THE DMK BY CONSTRUCTIVE METHODS
AND NOT BY AGITATION."

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2. KARUNANIDHI ANNOUNCED THAT THE DMK IS LAUNCHING A MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN BEGINNING MAY 1 TO TAKE STOCK OF THE PARTY'S STRENGTH.

3. KARUNANIDHI ALSO ANNOUNCED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUND TO MEET HIS AND OTHER DMK LEADERS' EXPENSES TO DEFEND THEMSELVES ON CORRUPTION CHARGES BEFORE THE SARKARIA COMMISSION. THIS FUND IS CALLED THE "ENQUIRY COMMISSION EXPENSES FUND." REPEATEDLY IN MURASOLI, THE DMK TAMIL DAILY, KARUNANIDHI APPEALED TO PARTY WORKERS AND SUPPORTERS TO CONTRIBUTE LIBERALLY TO THE FUND. MURASOLI APRIL 29 ANNOUNCED THAT DONATIONS TO THE FUND TOTALLED RS 1899.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST INDOOR MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE DMK AFTER THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE. WHILE PUBLIC MEETINGS ARE BANNED IN TAMIL NADU, POLITICAL PARTIES ARE PERMITTED TO HOLD INDOOR MEETINGS WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE POLICE.

THERE ARE SIGNS OF SOME REVIVAL OF ACTIVITY LATELY IN THE DMK WHICH HAS BEEN DORMANT SINCE ITS DISMISSAL. KARUNANIDHI WHO HAS BEEN LYING LOW IS BEGINNING TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY AT THE PARTY LEVEL AND AS EDITOR OF MURASOLI. HE AND DMK GENERAL SECRETARY V.R. NEDUNCHEZHIAN HAVE BEEN ISSUING DAILY STATEMENTS AND APPEALS LATELY IN MURASOLI INTENDED TO BOOST THE MORALE OF THE DMK RANK AND FILE. SOME OF THEIR STATEMENTS, COMPARED TO THE EARLIER DEFENSIVE AND APOLOGETIC UTTERANCES, HAVE RECENTLY TURNED OUT TO BE RATHER AGGRESSIVE AND AT TIMES PROVOCATIVE. THE SARCASTIC LANGUAGE USED IN THESE STATEMENTS IS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY DMK WORKERS. AT THE SAME TIME MURASOLI IS GIVING SPACE TO STATEMENTS MADE BY PRIME MINISTER GANDHI AND OTHER GOI MINISTERS WHOM THE DMK PAPER HAD EARLIER BOYCOTTED. BY PRAISING PRIME MINISTER GANDHI AND THE GOI (ALBEIT IN A LEFTHANDED FASHION) AND BY HOLDING INDOOR MEETINGS, MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNS AND FUND COLLECTIONS, KARUNANIDHI IS HOPING TO SALVAGE THE DMK FROM ITS PRESENT DEMORALIZED AND DISCREDITED STATE.

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UNQUOTE.
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